

Chapter No. 2105

15/SS26/R112

aj / Lb/Rc

***SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 513***

Originated in Senate

Liz Welch

Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 513

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION MOURNING THE LOSS AND COMMENDING THE DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVICE OF FORMER STATE SENATOR AND REPRESENTATIVE VINCENT GRADIE SCOPER OF LAUREL, MISSISSIPPI, AND EXTENDING THE SYMPATHY OF THE LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, the State Legislature and the State of Mississippi have lost one of its brightest citizens with the loss of former State Senator and Representative Vincent Gradie Scoper who passed away on September 14, 2014, in his hometown of Laurel, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, born May 15, 1933, in Pass Christian, Mississippi, to Vincent Gradie Scoper, Sr., and Bertha Scarborough Scoper, young Scoper was an outstanding student and star athlete at Pass Christian High School, Perkinston Community College and Mississippi State University; and

WHEREAS, Vincent Scoper will always be remembered as a man of character and kindness. Former colleagues in the Mississippi House of Representatives and the Mississippi State Senate, members of his church, and his profession have always spoken of him as an

honorable man who was respected by all. He was a statesman, politician, business owner, church leader, author and athlete. But more importantly, he was truly a man of God. He never hesitated in expressing his faith through teaching a Men's Bible Class, serving as Sunday School Director and a Deacon at First Baptist Church of Laurel. He also served as the Moderator of the Jones County Baptist Association; and

WHEREAS, Scoper was a self-made man, being the first of his family's generation to earn a college degree. He excelled in baseball, football, golf and tennis, and was ranked No. 1 on the Mississippi State University Tennis Team. Upon his graduation in 1955, he was honored with the MSU Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award for Character and Scholastic Achievement; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from Mississippi State University with a B.S. in Geology, he married the former Dell Thompson Dickins of Leland, Mississippi, and they moved to Grande Isle, Louisiana, for his first position as a Petroleum Geologist with Humble Oil Company (later Exxon). They were later transferred to Laurel where they started their family, having two children, Stephen and Cynthia. When asked by Humble Oil to transfer away from Laurel, Vince and Dell made a conscious decision to stay and make Laurel their home. Vincent began work as a Consulting Petroleum Geologist and in 1972, bought Mississippi Gauge and Supply Company. Having a strong work ethic all of his life, he

continued to work full time up until three weeks before his death;
and

WHEREAS, to fill a need in helping laymen understand the technicalities of the oil industry, Scoper wrote *Come Drill a Well in My Backyard*. Since its publication in the late 1960s, orders are still coming in with over 75,000 copies sold; and

WHEREAS, Senator Scoper began his political career in 1968 when he was elected as a Jones County Election Commissioner, becoming the first elected Republican since Civil War Reconstruction and laying the groundwork for the present day Republican Party in Jones County and Mississippi. He served 28 years in the Mississippi State Legislature; two terms in the House of Representatives and five terms in the Mississippi State Senate. Scoper spent his entire Senate career on the Oil & Gas Committee, serving as Vice Chairman and Chairman. Working for the betterment of the State of Mississippi, he served on the following House and Senate Committees: Oil, Gas and Other Minerals; Appropriations; Finance; Forestry; Economic Development, Tourism and Parks; Constitution; Highways and Transportation; Municipalities; Ports and Industries; Business and Financial Institutions; Labor; Environmental Protection, Conservation and Water Resources; Public Property; Public Utilities; Local and Private; Rules; and Fees, Salaries and Administration. The Nixon administration appointed him to the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Citizens Advisory Committee on Quality Transportation. During Governor

Fordice's Administration, he was appointed to serve on the National Energy Council which is made up of 10 countries in North and South America; and

WHEREAS, besides being a champion of the oil industry, Scoper was also a champion for the civic progress of Laurel and all communities in Jones County. He served as Campaign Chair and then as President of the United Way of Jones County. He was a member of the Laurel Rotary Club and served on the Executive Committee of the Jones County Republican Party. Scoper spoke fondly of receiving the "Citizen of the Year" Award for Laurel in 2003. "I enjoyed having a hand in working on the future of our community and state," he said at the time; and

WHEREAS, Vince Scoper was an avid and accomplished golfer his entire life. He enjoyed his status of being the oldest active golfer at the Laurel Country Club; and

WHEREAS, he was preceded in death by his father, Vincent Gradie Scoper, Sr.; mother, Bertha Scarborough Scoper; brother, Gordon A. Scoper; and brother and sister-in-law, Gerald L. Scoper and Gayle Scoper. He is survived by his wife, Dell Dickins Scoper; son and daughter-in-law, Stephen V. Scoper, MD and Nancy P. Scoper of Virginia Beach; daughter and son-in-law, Cynthia D. Scoper Folmar and David S. Folmar of Dallas; sister-in-law, Kathryn S. Scoper; sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Dorothy Dickins O'Neill and Thomas R. O'Neill; six grandchildren: Elizabeth P. Scoper, Julia B. Scoper, Gradie G. Folmar, Stokes S.

Folmar, Laurel D. Folmar, and Tatum J. Folmar; and seven nephews and nieces: Scott G. Scoper, Genie Scoper Howard, Kristin Scoper Hopper, Wendy Scoper O'Connor, Shannon Scoper Keute, John D. O'Neill and Jennifer D. Brammell; and

WHEREAS, Vince Scoper served as a leader and mentor of the Mississippi Legislature's standards, including ethics, integrity, civility, courtesy and adherence to the Rules. Vince Scoper's life honored both the Mississippi Legislature and this great state that he loved and served:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby mourn the loss and commend the dedicated public service of former State Senator and Representative Vincent Gradie Scoper of Laurel, Mississippi, and extend the sympathy of the Legislature.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to the surviving family of Senator Scoper and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
January 8, 2015



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
January 14, 2015



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES